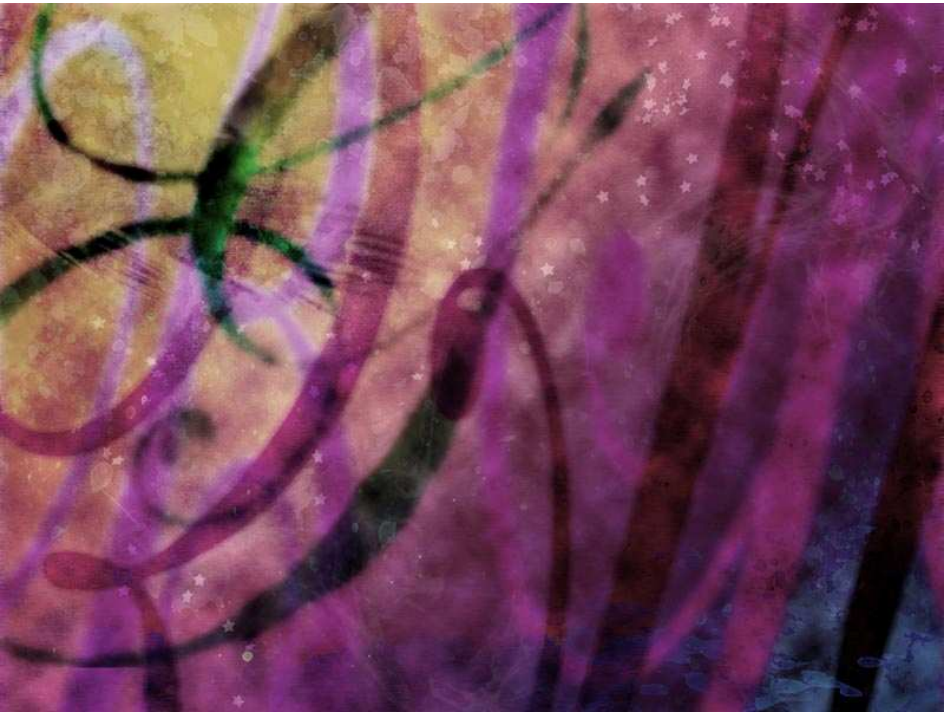


# The Highest Perch

*Paula Puddephatt*



Poetry

# The Highest Perch

*Paula Puddephatt*

**Free Evaluation Edition from obooko.com**

© Copyright 2011 Paula Puddephatt

Published by the Paula Puddephatt. Distributed worldwide by obooko

This edition is available free of charge exclusively to obooko members for evaluation purposes only. It may be amended and updated at any time by the author so please visit [www.obooko.com](http://www.obooko.com) to ensure you have the latest edition.

This book must not be copied or printed unless the author has given written permission for personal printing. It must not be sold in digital or printed form nor offered free or for sale on any website other than [www.obooko.com](http://www.obooko.com).

For more free e-books and to list your fiction or non-fiction book for free publication, please visit [www.obooko.com](http://www.obooko.com)

Please seek the permission of the poet, Paula Puddephatt, before reproducing any of these poems.

Paula's websites.....	3
About Paula.....	4
The Highest Perch.....	5
Employment Options.....	6
Spiritual Peace.....	7
Alternative CV.....	8
My Own "Bad Choices".....	9
Resigned.....	10
Not in God's Name.....	11
Who is "Everybody", Anyway?.....	12
Autumn.....	13
Obstacle Course.....	14
File Number.....	15
Quakers on Pacifism.....	16
Knock, knock.....	17
Depression.....	18
Moon Goddess.....	19
Sample Kyrielle.....	20

*Paula's websites include:*

<http://paulapuddephatt.tripod.com>

<http://paulapuddephatt.tripod.com/poetry>

<http://standrewsschool.tripod.com>

<http://www.freewebs.com/paulafiction>

<http://www.paulap.blog.com>

<http://www.quagan.blogspot.com>

<http://www.paulapuddephatt.wordpress.com>

<http://www.twitter.com/paulapuddephatt>

### ***About Paula***

Paula Puddephatt was born in Reading, Berkshire on 06/11/73. She is now married to Colin, and they live in Basingstoke, Hampshire, with their pet birds.

Paula writes both poetry and fiction. This is her first poetry “e-book”, although she has previously self-published two poetry collections through QQ Press (2003), “Paula Tree” and “Relations to Angels”. Themes include mental health and spirituality.

***The Highest Perch***

You'll meet few vegetarians at church.  
Humanity must have the highest perch.  
Christmas without dead turkey would be odd.  
Thou shalt kill for a pie from Sweeney Todd.

Want Biblical proof? We can grant your wish:  
Jesus fed the five thousand with *dead fish*.  
Let's empty every ocean of its cod.  
Thou shalt kill for a pie from Sweeney Todd.

"All Things Bright and Beautiful", they're singing.  
I enjoy the sound of church bells ringing,  
But what have churches got to do with God –  
When thou shalt kill for a pie from Sweeney Todd?

## ***Employment Options: Horses for Courses***

If you don't like animals,  
Then why work in a zoo?

Why become a plumber  
If you can't unblock a loo?

Train as a pilot, by all means –  
But not if you are scared of heights.

Only apply for nine-to-five posts,  
If you don't fancy working nights.

Don't really want to work with kids?  
You'll come across those in a school.

Lorry drivers are expected  
To drive lorries, as a rule.

Book phobics don't suit libraries,  
Or seek careers at Waterstones.

Get a job in Carphone Warehouse,  
And you'll end up selling phones.

You trained to "work in mental health".  
Now you get *paid* to do so.  
Present you with someone mentally ill –  
And, for some reason, they expect *you* to know  
What the Hell to do to help the *bloody person*.

***Spiritual Peace***

I find my place of spiritual peace  
Again, just when I feel I never will.  
There is a sense of freedom and release.  
I can't know all the answers, but am still

In touch with The Divine, and that is real.  
We're all connected. Life is precious, and  
Life doesn't end with death. Sometimes we feel  
A presence, and we come to understand

That nobody who's ever been has gone.  
The spirits of those who we've loved remain.  
They will protect us – help us to go on.  
There is almost a beauty in the pain.

Although sometimes I find it hard to trust,  
Truth's constant. Feel the patterns in the rust.



## ***Alternative CV***

I've tried to earn a living. What a joke.  
Had fewer breaks because I would not smoke.  
I've typed too many lists of license plates,  
And been in a few paralytic states.

I've tried to operate a fax machine.  
I have become addicted to caffeine.  
I've pretended not to hear a phone  
At five to five; I know I'm not alone.

I have been very bored, and felt depressed.  
I fear that you may not be too impressed  
By my honesty. That is just too bad.  
This poem may not please my mum and dad.

I have been stressed out over a deadline.  
I have known that I really shouldn't whine –  
But still ended up moaning, anyway.  
I've felt sick just *looking at* my In-tray.

***My Own “Bad Choices”***

You're calling me “Obsessive Compulsive”.  
You insist that Prozac is the key  
To wellness. You've no counselling to give.  
It won't help anyway, with OCD –

Or so you say. That's your view. It's not mine.  
You say I'm free to make my own “bad choices”.  
The customer is *always* wrong? Well, fine –  
Seems you just pretend to hear our voices.

My considered opinion remains.  
Big ask, but perhaps you could respect it?  
I don't want Prozac running through my veins.  
I'd rather work on *why* I feel like shit

Than take some dodgy drug, and replace my  
Emotions with some artificial “high”.

## ***Resigned***

Poetic inspiration glistening  
On the horizon of a troubled mind –  
She shuts it out. She is not listening.  
In her state of depression, she's resigned

To being uninspired. Darkness descends.  
She doesn't want to pretend there is hope  
When there is none. She doesn't trust her friends -  
And family is worse. She cannot cope

And just can't see a future anymore.  
Each day is a fresh battle to survive  
And she knows that she'll never win the war.  
She's lost her motivation and sex drive.

Her monthly hemorrhage is nearly due.  
She wishes for an early menopause.  
Sure, she'd have loved a baby – women *do* –  
But God is good at small-print, and a clause

Was slipped into her contract from the start.  
The NHS just *watch* her fall apart.

***Not in God's Name***

Protestant, Catholic, Mormon, Jew –  
I understand your point of view.  
If you can't mine – well, that's a shame.  
No "holy" war is in God's name.

Islam means "peace". We all want that.  
Meet the Quakers. Be friends and chat.  
Buddhist, Hindu – we're all the same.  
No "holy" war is in God's name.

Jehovah's Witness to a Sikh:  
Sisters and brothers, let us speak.  
It's not a case of placing blame.  
No "holy" war is in God's name.

"An ye harm none, do as ye will."  
The Wiccan Rede, we must fulfill.  
Let peace on Earth become our aim.  
No "holy" war is in God's name.

## ***Who is “Everybody”, Anyway?***

They're told to watch *X-factor*, so they do.  
They're atheists who married in a church.  
They almost, nearly have a point of view,  
And read the *Daily Mirror*, just like you.  
Nine in Ten are like them, says our research.

She does the vacuum cleaning every day.  
They'll have their second kid by thirty-five.  
Ibiza is their favourite place to stay.  
They buy and sell possessions on *ebay*.  
They get drunk to remember they're alive,

Or maybe to forget. Well, they work hard,  
So who could claim they haven't earned the right  
To boozy Friday nights – in which they've starred  
Since teenage years which left them battle-scarred?  
They've savings, but will tell you “money's tight”.

They went to Glastonbury for a laugh  
Two years ago. Now they can say they've been.  
He'll always drink a pint, and she a half.  
He likes to wave his Man United scarf.  
She “does the gym” to keep her body lean.

They download music now – don't buy CDs.  
They like the bands that it is “cool” to like.  
Her skirts do very nearly reach her knees.  
She can still wear a Ten – but not with ease.  
The Union tells him when to go on strike.

She must apply make-up before she can  
Put out the wheelie bins. She has her pride.

They have their mortgage, and their *Five-Year Plan*.  
She's in the garden, topping up her tan.  
He likes his dead pig breakfast, duly fried.

***Autumn***

Leaves turn to gold, bronze, copper, burgundy.  
It still feels warm, but sometimes there's a chill  
In the evening air. We wait until  
The leaves begin to tumble from the trees.  
What we feel now is more like wind than breeze,  
And we anticipate the winter's freeze.

## ***Obstacle Course***

Every day is an obstacle course  
For me to try – but fail – to navigate.  
I'm weighed down by my feelings of remorse.  
No-one's expecting to negotiate

Or budge an inch. They want it all their way.  
To me, that is unfair. I *say* as much,  
Which does not go down well. I will not play  
Their games, though. I don't know why there is such

An emphasis on who is right or wrong.  
We've lost the grey tones in the black-and-white.  
They'll hear the instruments, but miss the song.  
The lyrics matter, too: Let's get *that* right.

Another cup of tea would go down well.  
I'm still that school kid, waiting for the bell.

***File Number***

See the whole picture, and read the sub-text.  
I don't know what they've got planned for me next.  
When have they ever been honest before?  
When are they going to show me the door?  
I'd like control over my destiny.  
I realise that no lunches are free.  
They hold all the cards, and they enjoy that.  
I think it's unfair, and that's where I'm at –  
Not that it matters what I think or feel.  
I'm a file number, but not someone real.



## ***Quakers on Pacifism***

It is not “P. C.” to be anti-war,  
Or to refuse to stuff one’s face with meat.  
Quakers are not pacifists anymore

By definition. It’s not like before.  
These things are individual. We can cheat.  
It is not “P. C.” to be anti-war.

We cannot break an invisible law.  
We rubbed it out, you see. I should repeat:  
Quakers are not pacifists anymore.

Some are. Some aren’t. There’s nothing we stand for.  
We can have bacon, toast or Shredded Wheat.  
It is not “P. C.” to be anti-war –

To be vegetarian, vegan or  
In any way, restrict what one may eat.  
Quakers are not pacifists anymore.

This, Friends, is the conclusion we must draw –  
Won’t vote on this; we might just face defeat:  
It is not “P. C.” to be anti-war.  
Quakers are not pacifists anymore.

***Knock, knock***

We are not from Scottish Power,  
or even British Gas.  
We wouldn't drag you  
out of the shower  
for anything less than  
God. And just to let you know  
how to achieve Eternal Life...

We are nothing *like*  
the religious group  
who called on you last night.  
There is one major difference:  
They are wrong, and we are right.

Certain substances must be avoided  
like heroin and cups of tea.  
Is it worthwhile mainlining –  
or enjoying Typhoo or PG –  
if, because of that, you cannot live  
with God eternally?

You can stuff your face with chocolate, crisps –  
and Diet Coke is not outlawed.  
You can even have some Red Bull  
to wash down all that chocolate,  
if you're getting *very* bored.

You need to be baptised, and soon.  
Your last one doesn't count:  
insufficient water, and you were too young.  
What *about* the Baptist Church?  
You're being awkward now.  
Okay, let's cut straight to the chase.  
No other church has authority  
from God. We *do*.

## ***Depression***

I scrape my motivation off the floor –  
Pretend that I can face another day.  
I might appear to go on as before,  
But am not really here. What can I say?

It's self-indulgent to write poetry  
Like this, so I try not to, but I fail.  
I realise that this is "Me, me, me".  
Who are these other people who all sail

Through life? They have problems, too. I know that.  
*Start* with compassion. That's what Buddha said.  
What conclusion am I to arrive at?  
Who knows? Must drag myself out of this bed

Each day, and it is getting very hard to.  
I guess that it is just the same for you.

***Moon Goddess***

As indigo skies dissolve  
into jet-black,  
Her silver shimmer  
gently answers  
passionate prayers.

## ***Sample Kyrielle***

I need to demonstrate a skill.  
None of my poems fit the bill.  
I'll write a new one. What the Hell.  
I need another kyrielle.

I must not mention politics  
Or religion. I'm in a fix.  
A sonnet – that's all *very well*.  
I need another kyrielle

I can't go on about my weight,  
Be negative, or full of hate.  
Won't settle for a villanelle.  
I need another kyrielle.

I mustn't moan about the shrinks,  
Or point out that the "system" stinks.  
The truth remains, but *I* won't tell.  
Just need another kyrielle.

Won't criticise my CPN.  
Oh dear, I must put down my pen.  
Must write a new one. What the Hell.  
I need another kyrielle.